

The book concludes with Andrew Petrie's concise account of the role of Australian State and Territory Poison Information Centres and an interesting analysis of the numbers and variety of cases they deal with, which are shown to bear close resemblance to figures from the USA. Here it is also pointed out that such information is our best guide to the areas of greatest concern and yet the content of the book is curiously at odds with the statistics. About 8% of all cases handled are bites and stings and slightly less are from ingesting plants (and fungi). However, in the book 70 pages deal with plants whilst bites and stings claim 360. Of all bite and sting incidents only 1.5% are caused by snakes and yet 50% of this section, well over one third of the book, meticulously scrutinises every aspect of snake envenomation. In the whole book there are 48 coloured pictures of which 22 are snakes. In fact the illustrations are one of the book's weaknesses. A number of captions to black and white photographs still refer to coloured detail which indicates original plans were changed. Correspondingly the book's usefulness in promoting avoidance by recognition is severely reduced. The other fault is repetitiveness. The book is a compendium of separate articles and the editors have

been negligent in permitting extensive duplication which coupled with the huge editorial bias on snakes must have been at the expense of more coloured photographs. The volume contains a wealth of knowledge but finding all that pertains to a particular group is not as straightforward as it should be since related information is often split into separate chapters occasionally with misleading titles.

For \$24.95 it's a good book but it could have been a great book.

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Outrigger Canoes of Bali and Madura, Indonesia

by Adrian Horridge

Bishop Museum Press: Honolulu 1987 ISBN 0 930 89720 X

Pp.xiii + 178; 93 Figs; 1 Col. Pl; R.R.P.: \$27.00

In his introduction Adrian Horridge states that this "study of outrigger canoes is deliberately intended to be an interdisciplinary study". The subjects which the author sets out to cover are "canoe construction, perfor-

mance and history, canoe vocabulary and canoe ceremonies" (p. xii).

Primarily this volume provides an outstandingly detailed and technical description of the outrigger canoes of Bali, Madura and

neighbouring areas. These canoes are varied, beautiful and some are spectacular. This study reveals that they are also sophisticated and evolved vessels. The technical descriptions are well illustrated with drawings and sketches.

The villages where the various designs of canoe can be found are listed and directions for reaching them given. The parts of the canoes are individually described and named, their design and construction is elaborated and details of various ceremonies are given.

The book is arranged in three parts. The first deals with Bali, the second deals with Madura and East Java, and the third part discusses the evolution of Pacific canoe rigs. This latter part is only indirectly connected with the main subject of the book and covers a somewhat contentious area.

In justifying the inclusion of a theory about the development Pacific canoe rigs, Horridge asserts that "the Low Balinese and Madurese languages are more akin to Polynesian than they are to any of the languages of Asia" (p. xi). This is a simplification which contrasts Balinese and Madurese with the mainland Indo-Chinese languages but discounts the many Austronesian languages of South East Asia.

Before setting out his theory on Pacific rigs Horridge describes and names the many rigs that can be found throughout Austronesian maritime technology and in this he improves on previous definitions because he takes note

not only of sail shapes but of different setting and handling techniques that make sails functionally dissimilar. In this respect he gets away from the diffusionist desire to see all sails as essentially the same.

There is a brief discussion of previous theories about the development and distribution of Pacific rigs. These are theories about migration and the populating of the Pacific using canoe technology and terminology as evidence. Horridge points out some of the problems with these theories particularly Doran's recent ideas (Doran 1981).

Finally he puts forward his own ideas but these are no more based on evidence than Doran's ideas are in Horridge's assessment. The Horridge theory is imaginative but unprovable because it is based on pure speculation. We are invited: "Let us imagine what kind of a rig a sensible raft captain living in, say, Sulawesi 30,000 years ago would have had" (p. 154). Of course we will never know.

Anyway it doesn't matter because "Out-rigger Canoes of Bali and Madura" is an excellent tribute to these beautiful sailing craft and their builders.

Doran, E. 1981. *Wangka: Austronesian canoe origins*. Texas A & M University Press: Texas.

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Allozyme electrophoresis: A handbook for animal systematics and population studies

by B.J. Richardson, P.R. Baverstock and M. Adams

Academic Press: Sydney, Florida, London 1986 ISBN 0 125 87840 0
Pp. 401; R.R.P.: \$60.00 (hard cover)

This excellent volume has been produced by three of Australia's leading biochemical geneticists. Perhaps an illustration of their combined experience is best shown by the

diversity of organisms which they have studied in the past. These include dolphins, ungulates, marsupials (both dasyurid and macropodid), rodents, rabbits, bats, birds,